

ICOLC Fall 2004

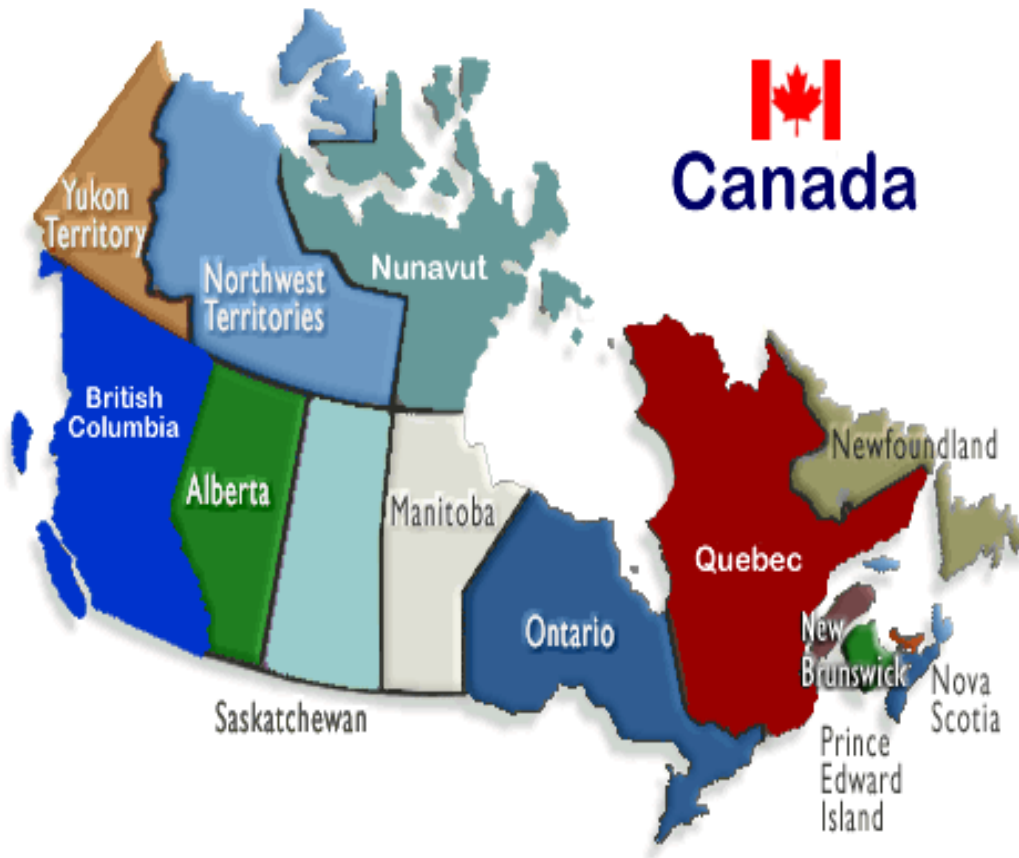
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Consortia Collaboration: The View from Canada

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Canadian Research Knowledge Network
Réseau canadien de documentation pour la recherche

Canada: a nation of regions



- Population: 32 million
- Government: federal, provincial/territorial & municipal
- No national funding authority for education
- Federal research granting councils
- Federal agenda for innovation

University libraries

- University community nation-wide:
 - Less than 100 universities
 - Approx. 800,000 professors & students
- Strong tradition of resource sharing
 - overcome the “tyranny of distance”
 - make scarce resources go farther
 - harness strengths of multiple organizations
 - **seize new opportunities through new enterprises**

Consortia in Canada

- Development of local, provincial, regional, multi-regional consortia
- Response to scalability challenges
- Focus on electronic resources
 - Discovery, requesting, delivery
 - Content licensing
 - Maintain institutional mission and processes

Canadian Research Knowledge Network

- “Daughter” of Canadian National Site Licensing Project (CNSLP)
 - seed funding from Canada Foundation for Innovation
 - building a national community on regional strengths
- Collaborative program of Canadian universities & their libraries
 - not-for-profit corporation, April 2004
 - member-owned and funded
 - ongoing program

CRKN Overview

Mission:

- to expand the universe of digital research information available to Canada's academic research community, through the coordinated services and expertise of academic libraries

Core Purpose:

- to increase the capacity for research and innovation in Canada

CRKN Overview (cont.)

Objectives:

- **Expand** the research content available to researchers nation-wide
- **Speed** transition to digital materials & value-added forms of content, and **maximize its value** through networked access
- **Leverage** the buying power and influence of Canadian universities

Base assumptions

- Our collections are inadequate
- Our resources are underutilized
- Our ability to predict & anticipate users' needs is flawed
- Our spending & efforts are fragmented
- We are small fish in a very large pond
- The environment is changing...

Why incorporation?

- Empowerment & accountability of Board of Directors
- Members' rights & responsibilities
- Legal liability in executing contracts
- Relationship with regional consortia, national associations & host organization
- Organizational stability / maturity

Creating a new organization

- We share vision
 - we construct a collaborative response to need & opportunity
- We share a voice within the national agenda
 - research content *is infrastructure*
 - equitable access to research content is *essential public policy*
 - *libraries are central* to a thriving knowledge-based society
- We share expertise
 - we will demonstrate “proof of concept” on a national scale, and apply learnings to future work
- We share power
 - we will create new models & value

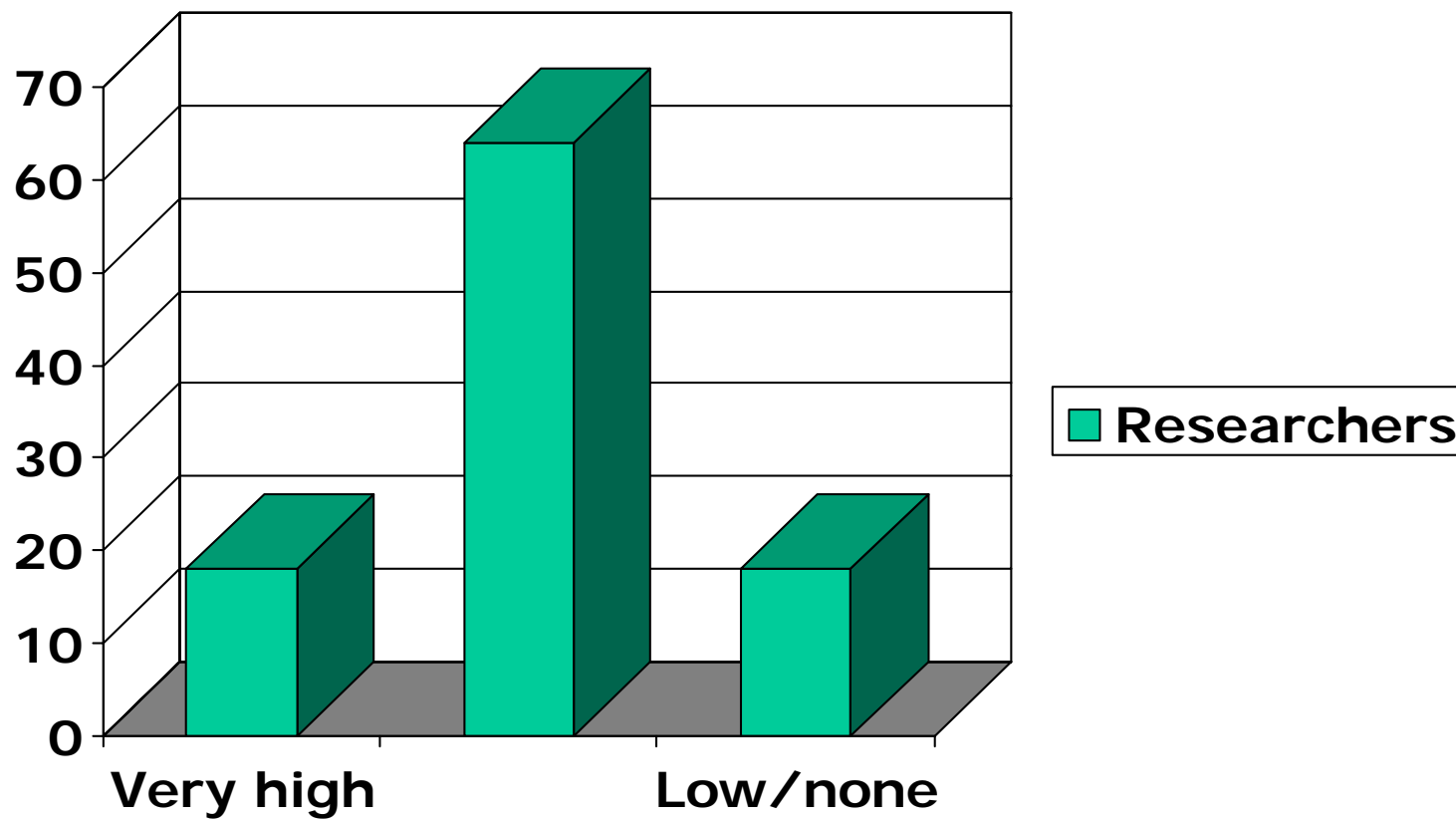
Impacts

- Formal evaluation
 - Researcher study
 - Survey of library directors
 - Usage

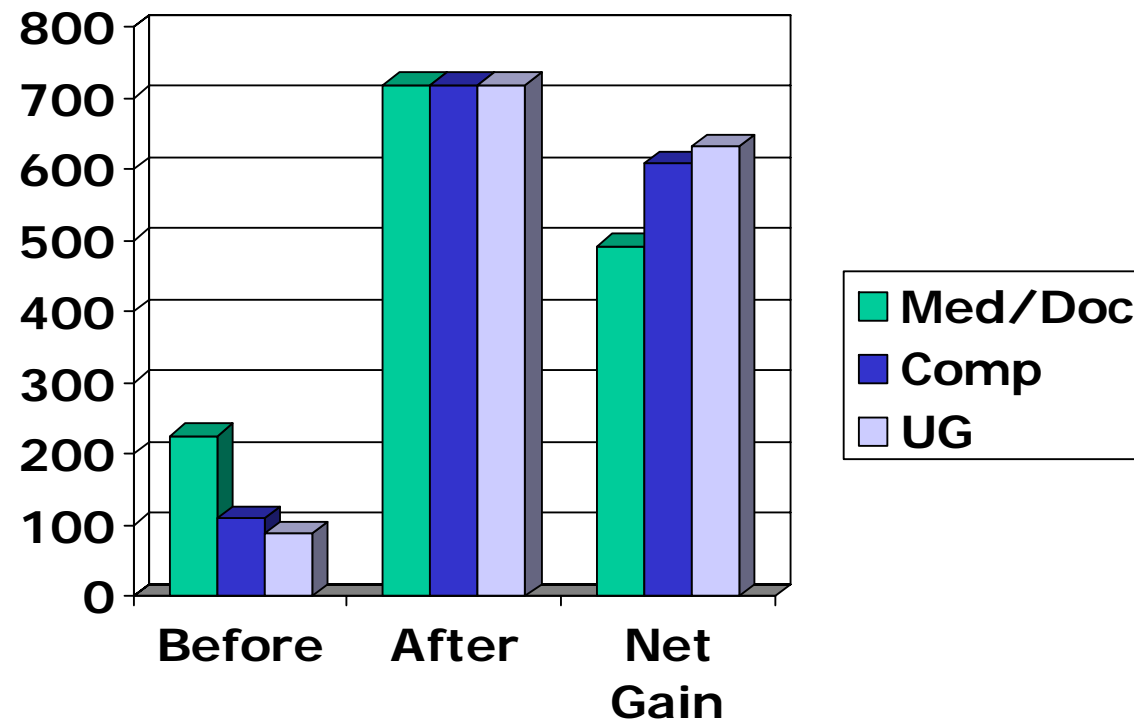
Accelerated Use of Digital Formats by Researchers

	Paper	Digital
2001	70%	31%
2003	35%	65%

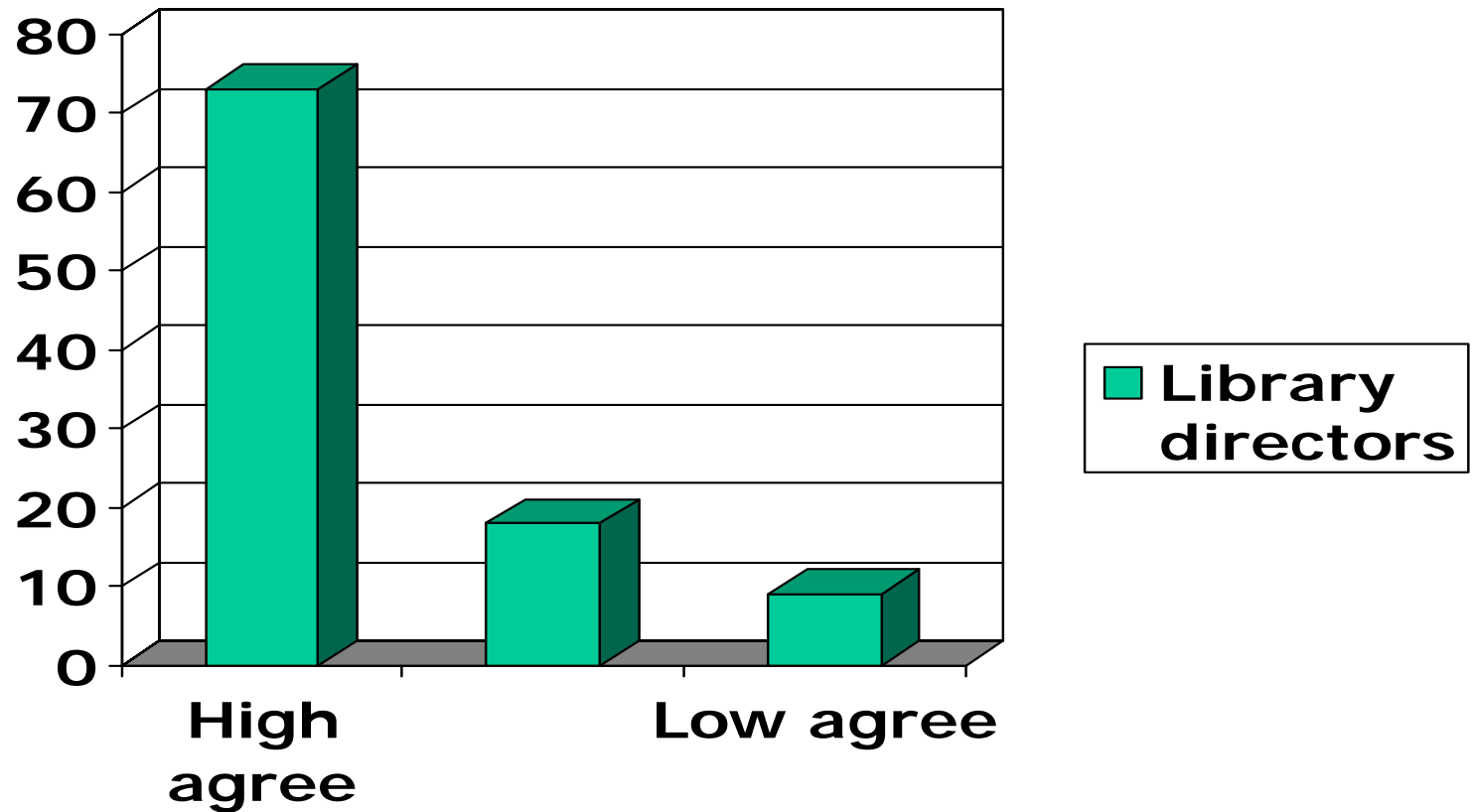
Impact on Conducting Research



Increased equity of access for researchers



Accelerated E-journal Adoption



Accelerate E-journal Adoption

(cont.)

- *CNSLP had a high profile with our university administration; their philosophical support aided in the transition to financing e-only journals.*

Usage

- Annual growth in usage
- Usage growth holds true across regions & types of universities

Tough lessons learned

- assume nothing
- “negotiations” with consortia members and partners can be more complex than negotiations with vendors
- there can never be enough communication
- our strengths are our weaknesses

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Strategies for success

- **Move from “problem-driven” to “vision-driven”**
 - problems = catalyst ; vision = commitment
 - seek broad agendas
 - build agreement on big issues
- **Focus on collaboration, not merely cooperation**
 - look beyond institutional self-interest
 - extend reach & impact, not cut costs
 - define relationships & build trust through pilot projects
 - build interdependence

Strategies for success (cont.)

- **Build consensus**
 - agree on process for decision making
 - value disagreements
 - avoid thinking in terms of win-lose
 - use small groups to mobilize large group
 - articulate agreement / decisions clearly & often
- **Pay attention to accountability**
 - “goodness” is not self-evident; good ideas fail every day
 - demonstrate return on investment

Strategies for success (cont.)

- **Risk reduction is good for all parties**
 - encourages movement / innovation
 - allows shift in business practices
- **Be aware of unintended consequences**
 - e.g. empowerment vs. disenfranchisement
 - be careful what you ask for...
 - no single answer: adopt complementary strategies, experiment, build alliances
- **Small can be beautiful**

Thank you

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